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Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Second session
New York, 2-4 September 2009

Report of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

I. Introduction

1. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/106 of 13 December 2006, and entered into force on 3 May 2008. In accordance with article 40 of the Convention,[1] and as agreed during the first session, the second session of the Conference of States Parties was convened in 2009 to discuss the implementation of the Convention. The theme of the session was "Legislative measures to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities".

2. The Conference held four formal meetings, the first of which was a high-level panel, on 2 September. Two interactive round tables, entitled "Accessibility and reasonable accommodation" and "Equal recognition before the law, access to justice and support and decision-making" were held during the second and third meetings, on the mornings of 2 and 3 September respectively. During its fourth meeting, the Conference held an interactive dialogue on United Nations system support for the implementation of the Convention, followed by an informal segment on emerging issues, held on 3 September and co-chaired by members of the Bureau and civil society, entitled "The global economic crisis, poverty and the implementation of the Convention".

3. The Conference agreed to hold its third session in September 2010, at which time it will elect members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and of the Bureau of the Conference.

[1] Under article 40 of the Convention, the States parties are to meet regularly in a Conference of States Parties to consider any matter related to the implementation of the Convention, as well as to elect members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary-General biennially or upon the decision of the Conference of States Parties.

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II. Opening of the meeting and high-level panel on legislative measures to implement the Convention

4. The second session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held from 2 to 4 September 2009.

5. The first meeting was called to order on 2 September by the President of the Conference, Claude Heller (Mexico). The Conference adopted the provisional agenda contained in CRPD/CSP/2009/1.

6. Pursuant to rule 25, paragraph 5 (c), of the rules of procedure for the Conference of States Parties to the Convention (as contained in CRPD/CSP/2008/3, see CRPD/CSP/2008/4, para. 3) and on the basis of a non-objection procedure, 10 non-governmental organizations were accredited to the Conference (see annex I). The Conference decided that national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights could participate in the Conference.

7. Opening statements were made by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Director of the New York Office of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Mohammed Al-Tarawneh, and, representing civil society, Jan-Peter Strömgren, Chairperson of the International Disability Alliance CRPD Forum.

8. The Conference proceeded to consider agenda item 3 (a), entitled "Matters related to the implementation of the Convention: high-level panel on the theme Legislative measures to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities".

9. The second meeting of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention was called to order on 2 September 2009 by the Vice-Chairperson, Gábor Bródi (Hungary). The high-level segment continued during the first part of that meeting. During the high-level segment, 33 States informed the Conference of progress made in the implementation of the Convention, particularly on legislative measures to implement the Convention.[2] Non-governmental organizations also made statements.

III. Interactive round table on legislative measures and accessibility and reasonable accommodation

10. After the high-level segment, also at its second meeting, the Conference initiated consideration of agenda item 3 (b), entitled "Matters related to the implementation of the Convention: interactive round tables on the theme Legislative measures to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities". An interactive round table was held on the theme of "Accessibility and reasonable accommodation". The round table was chaired by Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) and comprised two members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Monsur Ahmed Chowdhury and Ana Peláez Narváez, and

[2] Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland and the United States of America.

two experts from civil society, Wilfredo Guzmán Jara of Disabled Peoples' International and Anne Hawker of Rehabilitation International. Following the presentations, representatives of Governments and non-governmental organizations made statements.

IV. Interactive round table on legislative measures and equal recognition before the law, access to justice and decision-making

11. The third meeting of the Conference of States Parties was called to order on 3 September 2009. The meeting was co-chaired by Noluthando Agatha Mayende-Sibiya, Minister of Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities (South Africa) and Jim McLay (New Zealand). During the meeting, an interactive round table on the theme of "Equal recognition before the law, access to justice and support and decision-making" was held, comprising two members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Edah Wangechi Maina, Vice-Chairperson, and Maria Soledad Cisternas Reyes, and two experts from civil society, Tirza Leibowitz of Survivor Corps and Tina Minkowitz of the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. Following the presentations, representatives of Governments and non-governmental organizations made statements.

V. Interactive dialogue on United Nations system support for the implementation of the Convention

12. The fourth meeting of the Conference of States Parties was called to order on 4 September 2009. The meeting was co-chaired by Claude Heller (Mexico) and Jim McLay (New Zealand). During that meeting, the Conference initiated consideration of agenda item 3 (c), entitled "Matters related to the implementation of the Convention: interactive dialogue on United Nations system support for the implementation of the Convention".

13. During the interactive dialogue, presentations were made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; the Deputy Director of the New York Office of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; Amna Ali Al Suweidi, member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Capital Master Plan; the senior adviser and cluster leader of the Inclusive Development and Poverty Group in the Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme; and the Deputy Director, Policy and Practice, of the United Nations Children's Fund. Following the presentations, representatives of Governments and non-governmental organizations made statements.

VI. Summary of the informal session on emerging issues: the global economic crisis, poverty and the implementation of the Convention

14. Following the interactive dialogue, Regina Maria Melo Atalla, President of the Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS), presented a summary of the informal session on emerging issues, held on 3 September. The informal session was focused on the theme "The global economic crisis, poverty and the implementation of the Convention" and was co-chaired by Jim McLay (New Zealand) on behalf of the Bureau and Catalina Devandas on behalf of RIADIS. Following the presentations, representatives of Governments and non-governmental organizations made statements.

VII. Other matters and closing of the Conference

A. Elections

15. Also at its fourth meeting, the Conference initiated consideration of agenda item 4, entitled "Other matters". The President of the Conference noted that in accordance with article 34, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the term of the six experts whose names were chosen by lot during the first session of the Conference would expire at the end of two years. During its third session the Conference would elect six members to replace those whose term expires on 31 December 2010.[3]

16. The President also noted that, as established in article 34, paragraphs 2 and 6, of the Convention, should there be an additional 60 ratifications or accessions to the Convention, at least four months before the date of the election of members of the Committee, the membership of the Committee would increase by six members, attaining a maximum number of 18 members. The President further noted that, as established in article 34, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Secretary-General of the United Nations would address a letter to the States parties inviting them to submit the nominations within two months, and subsequently prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating the State parties that had nominated them, and submit it to the States Parties to the Convention.

17. The President further noted that pursuant to rule 9 the rules of procedure of the Conference of States Parties, the members of the Bureau, consisting of one President and four Vice-Presidents, would be elected to a two-year term. The term of the members of the current Bureau (Hungary, Jordan, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa) ends on 30 October 2010. During its third session, the Conference will also elect the members of the Bureau.

[3] The six experts whose term expires on 31 December 2010 are: Lotfi Ben Lallahom; György Könczei; Edah Wangechi Maina; Ronald McCallum; Germán Xavier Torres Correa; and Cveto Uršič.

B. Documentation

18. The Conference had before it two background documents: (a) a compilation of legislative measures undertaken to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;[4] and (b) "Thematic Study by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on enhancing awareness and understanding of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" (A/HRC/10/48).

19. The Conference requested the Secretariat to: (a) continue to update the compilation of legislative measures to implement the Convention; (b) prepare a compilation of good practices on accessibility and reasonable accommodations; and (c) prepare a compilation on good practices on equal recognition before the law, access to justice and support and decision-making.

20. Statements made at the opening, interactive round tables and discussion of the second session of the Conference of States Parties, as well as other related information, can be accessed or submitted to the secretariat at: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1479.

C. Date of the next session of the Conference of States Parties

21. The Conference agreed to hold its third session during the first week of September 2010, and that the exact dates would be determined pending consultations on the availability of conference services.

[4] The compilation of legislative measures undertaken to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is based on the data available to the secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as at 26 August 2009. The sources of the data are: (a) information received from States parties and signatories to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in response to the request by the President of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention dated 18 June 2009 to provide inputs on recent legislative measures; (b) information received from Member States in response to two notes verbales by the Secretary-General dated 22 April 2009 requesting inputs to two reports of the Secretary-General to the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly; and (c) other independent inputs and submissions from States parties and signatories.

Annex I

Non-governmental organizations accredited to the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities during its second session

In accordance with rule 25, paragraph 5 (c), of the rules of procedure of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, following a no-objection procedure, the following non-governmental organizations were accredited:

1. AIDS-Free World
2. Barbados Council for the Disabled
3. Colombian Centre for Integrated Rehabilitation
4. Disability Rights Promotion International
5. Electronic Frontier Foundation
6. Global Partnership for Disability and Development
7. Koshish (national mental health self-help organization)
8. Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families
9. Somaliland National Disability Forum
10. ZELDA (resource centre for people with mental disability)